

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

EB-07 COME-00 CU-02 DHA-02 /071 W

----- 095689

R 111707Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7141

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL MUNICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 04112

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, WB, GW, UR, SOPN

SUBJECT: REASONS FOR SOVIET REFUSAL TO PARTICIPATE
IN BERLIN SPEED SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS

SUMMARY: A SENIOR FRG FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL HAS
TOLD US THAT THE PRINCIPAL BLAME FOR RUSSIAN REFUSAL TO
PARTICIPATE IN THE WORLD SPEED SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS
IN BERLIN APPEARS TO LIE NOT WITH THE SOVIETS BUT WITH
THE FAILURE OF THE WEST GERMAN SPORTS FEDERATION TO
FOLLOW AGREED PROCEDURES. HE SAID THE FRG WOULD TRY
TO MAKE SURE THIS WOULD NOT HAPPEN AGAIN, AND ASKED
OUR HELP. END SUMMARY

1. FOREIGN OFFICE MINISTERIAL DIRIGENT MEYER-LANDRUT,
IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR, HAS
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GIVEN US THE FOLLOWING BACKGROUND ON THE SOVIET REFUSAL

TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORLD SPEED SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS
HELD RECENTLY IN BERLIN:

-- IN 1973, MEYER-LANDRUT, BLECH AND OTHER GERMAN
OFFICIALS HAD MET WITH THE RUSSIANS IN MOSCOW AND HAD
REACHED SOME AGREEMENTS GOVERNING BETTER CONDITIONS FOR
BERLIN'S PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL EVENTS.

-- UNDER THOSE CONDITIONS, THE RUSSIANS LIFTED
THEIR OBJECTIONS AGAINST PARTICIPATION OF BERLINERS
IN WEST GERMAN SPORTS TEAMS PARTICIPATING IN INTERNA-
TIONAL MEETS IN BLOC COUNTRIES. THE RUSSIANS NO
LONGER INSISTED ON SEPARATE TEAMS BUT ACCEPTED
BERLINERS AS PART OF THE FRG TEAM. THE RUSSIANS HAVE
LIVED UP TO THE TERMS OF THIS AGREEMENT, EVEN GOING
SO FAR AS DESCRIBING A BERLIN ATHLETE WHO HAD WON A
CHAMPIONSHIP AS A MEMBER OF THE FRG TEAM.

-- UNDER THOSE CONDITIONS, THE RUSSIANS ALSO
AGREED THAT BERLIN FIRMS COULD TAKE PART IN INTERNA-
TIONAL EXHIBITIONS AS PART OF AN FRG STAND AND UNDER
THE FRG FLAG. THE ONLY RUSSIAN CONDITION, FULLY
ACCEPTABLE TO THE GERMANS, WAS THAT THE BERLIN EXHI-
BITORS HAD TO HAVE A SMALL BERLIN FLAG AT THEIR STAND
AS WELL AS SOME SIGN TO THE EFFECT THAT THE PARTICIPA-
TION OF THAT PARTICULAR FIRM TOOK PLACE UNDER THE
TERMS OF THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT.

-- UNDER THOSE CONDITIONS, THE RUSSIANS AND
GERMANS AGREED THAT, IN THE CASE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL
MEETINGS IN BERLIN, THE APPROPRIATE GERMAN AND BERLIN
ORGANIZATIONS WOULD ISSUE SEPARATE INVITATIONS. NO
SEPARATE INVITATION WOULD BE REQUIRED FROM THE SENAT,
HOWEVER, IN THE CASE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.

-- UPON THEIR RETURN FROM MOSCOW, THE WEST GERMAN
FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS TOLD THE GERMAN SPORTBUND,
AS WELL AS OTHER NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, OF
THESE AGREEMENTS. THE SPORTBUND NEVER PARTICULARLY
LIKED THE AGREEMENTS AND INDICATED IT MIGHT NOT FULLY
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CARRY THEM OUT. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TOLD THE SPORT-
BUND THAT IT WOULD BE THE SPORTBUND'S RESPONSIBILITY
IF THEIR FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE AGREEMENTS CREATED
DIFFICULTIES.

-- IN THE SPECIFIC CASE OF THE SPEED SKATING
CHAMPIONSHIPS, THE FIRST INVITATION ISSUED BY THE
GERMAN ICE SKATING FEDERATION DID NOT FOLLOW THE

APPROVED FORM. THE SECOND INVITATION CAME SOMEWHAT CLOSER IN THAT IT DID SAY THAT THE BERLIN ORGANIZATION WELCOMED THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS, BUT THERE WAS NO SEPARATE BERLIN INVITATION. A SOVIET EMBASSY OFFICIAL EVEN TOLD MEYER-LANDRUT THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD HAVE HAD NO PROBLEM IF THERE HAD BEEN TWO SEPARATE INVITATIONS RATHER THAN ONE PIECE OF PAPER IN WHICH

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COME-00 CU-02 DHA-02 SAJ-01 /071 W

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 04112

THE BERLIN FEDERATION WAS SEPARATELY MENTIONED.

-- THE RUSSIANS, PERHAPS FOR BARGAINING PURPOSES, MUDDIED THE WATERS BY DEMANDING AN INVITATION FROM THE SENAT. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THEY DID THIS AS A MAXIMUM BARGAINING POSITION OR BY MISTAKE.

-- DESPITE THE RUSSIAN OBJECTIONS TO THE FORM OF THE INVITATION, THE RUSSIANS REQUESTED SPACE FOR THEIR TEAM AND MADE ALL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SENDING A TEAM, ALTHOUGH TWO DAYS AFTER THE DEADLINE HAD EXPIRED. IT APPEARS THAT THEY WERE FINALLY PERSUADED TO PULL OUT BECAUSE OF SOME ATTACKS UPON THEM MADE IN THE GERMAN PRESS BY GERMAN SPORTS OFFICIALS AND BY BERLIN POLITICAL FIGURES.

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2. AFTER OFFERING THIS RECITAL, MEYER-LANDRUT SAID HE BELIEVED THE RUSSIANS HAD WANTED TO ATTEND AND HAD NOT WANTED TO USE THIS PARTICULAR MEET IN ORDER TO ADVANCE A POLITICAL POSITION OR TO DAMAGE THE VIABILITY OF BERLIN. HE SAID THAT, EVEN AS ALL THIS CONTROVERSY WAS DEVELOPING, ANOTHER RUSSIAN TEAM WAS PARTICIPATING IN ANOTHER MINOR INTERNATIONAL SPORTS EVENT IN BERLIN (TO WHICH THEY HAD APPARENTLY BEEN INVITED ONLY BY THE BERLIN GROUP). HE ADDED THAT HE DETECTED A HARDENING OF SOVIET POSITIONS IN OTHER AREAS REGARDING BERLIN AND GERMANY, BUT THAT HE COULD NOT CONCLUDE THAT THE SOVIETS HAD DELIBERATELY PULLED BACK FROM THE SPEED SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS TO DAMAGE THE POSITION OF BERLIN.

3. MEYER-LANDRUT SAID HE WAS WORRIED BECAUSE AN INTERNATIONAL SWIMMING MEET WAS SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN BERLIN THIS SUMMER. ONCE THE POLISH ISSUE WAS BEHIND US, HE HOPED TO ASK FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER TO CALL IN THE SPORTBUND AND TO TELL ITS LEADERS THAT THEIR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE 1973 PROCEDURES WAS DAMAGING ONLY BERLIN AND THAT THEY SHOULD FOLLOW THOSE PROCEDURES HENCEFORTH.

4. MEYER-LANDRUT SAID IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THE ALLIES WOULD ALSO INDICATE THAT THEY FAVORED HAVING GERMAN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS FOLLOW THE 1973 PROCEDURES, SINCE THOSE PROCEDURES PARALLELED THE RULES AGREED TO IN THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT FOR OFFICIAL ORGANIZATIONS. THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR SUGGESTED THAT THE FRG RAISE THIS FORMALLY IN THE BONN GROUP, GIVING THE ALLIES THE FULL BACKGROUND, SO THAT WE MIGHT GIVE IT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION.
HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ATHLETIC PRESENTATIONS, INVITATIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BONN04112
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760092-1111
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760373/aaaacIwe.tel
Line Count: 218
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 MAR 2004 by MartinML>; APPROVED <01 APR 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REASONS FOR SOVIET REFUSAL TO PARTICIPATE IN BERLIN SPEED SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, SOPN, WB, GE, UR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006